

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PRESS REPORT ON CAMBODIANS FOR REPATRIATES
FOR SENIOR CIVIL COORDINATOR

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF AFP PRESS REPORT FROM HONG KONG
ON INTERVIEW BY FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW WITH SIHANOUK'S
PRESS ATTACHE, NOUTH CHOEUM. WOULD-BE CAMBODIAN REPATRIATES
SHOULD BE MADE AWARE OF SUBSTANCE OF INTERVIEW.

BEGIN TEXT: THE KHMER ROUGE HAVE DOUBLE-CROSSED CAMBODIAN
HEAD OF STATE PRINCE SIHANOUK WHO NOW EXPECTS TO BE REJECT-
ED BY THE COUNTRY'S NEW LEADERS, THE PRINCE'S PRESS ATTACHE
SAID IN AN INTERVIEW PUBLISHED HERE TODAY.

THE ATTACHE, NOUTH CHOEUM, TOLD THE FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC
REVIEW THAT PRINCE SIHANOUK WAS APPALLED BY WHAT HE SAW
DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO PHNOM PENH, THAT THE PRINCE'S
POSITION WAS AN "UNEASY SINECURE" ANCLEARLY HINTED
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THAT THE PRINCE'S LIFE WAS IN DANGER.

MR. NOUTH SAID THAT THE KHMER ROUGE WERE NOW SPLIT INTO PRO-SOVIET AND PRO-CHINESE FACTIONS WITH THE PRO-SOVIETS--WHO WERE CLOSE TO HANOI--IN THE ASCENDANCY.

THE ATTACHE HAD HARD WORDS FOR THE KHMER ROUGE, LABELLING THEM AT TIMES DURING THE INTERVIEW "MONSTROUS LIBERATORS, GUERRILLA GANGSTERS, FANATICS AND IMPRACTICAL IDEALOGUES" AND TERMING THEM "COWARDLY AND HYPOCRITICAL".

HE SAID THAT THE KHMER ROUGE WORRIED CHINA AND PEKING HELD THEY WERE "TRYING TO WALK TOO FAST".

MR. NOUTH SAID THAT THE KHMER ROUGE WERE "INTENT ON RUSHING PELL-MELL TOWARDS COMMUNISM".

HE ADDED: "THEY WON CAMBODIA AT GUNPOINT. NOW THEY EXPECT TO REBUILD THE SAME WAY...

"YOU CERTAINLY CANNOT ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO REPAIR AND RECONSTRUCT THE COUNTRY WITH WHIPS AND RIFLE BUTTS. OPPOSITION WILL GRADUALLY ARISE. AND WHEN IT DOES, SIHANOUK'S POLITICAL ACUMEN WILL SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY. UNLESS, OF COURSE, THE GUNMEN GET HIM FIRST," MR. NOUTH SAID.

THE PRESS ATTACHE SAID FEARS ABOUT THE KHMER ROUGE'S ATTITUDE FIRST AROSE WHEN THE GUERRILLAS FAILED TO REPORT THE FALL OF PHNOM PENH TO PRINCE SIHANOUK IN PEKING ON APRIL 17 AND WORSENER WHEN THEY IGNORED THE DEATH OF THE PRINCE'S MOTHER, QUEEN NOSSAMAK, 11 DAYS LATER.

MR. NOUTH SAID THAT, BEFORE LEAVING FOR PHNOM PENH, PRINCE SIHANOUK TOLD HIS ENTOURAGE "MY DECISION TO RETURN TO CAMBODIA DOES NOT EXPRESS THE FACT THAT I AGREE WITH THE CRUEL POLICY OF THE RED KHMERS BUT THAT I MUST SACRIFICE MYSELF FOR THE HONOUR OF CHINA AND HIS EXCELLENCY (CHINESE PREMIER) CHOU EN-LAI WHO HELPED SO MUCH CAMBODIA AND MYSELF."

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MR. NOUTH CHARGED THAT PHNOM PENH HAD BEEN BRUTALLY DEPOPULATED# AS PART OF A PLAN TO CLEAR THE CITY WHICH, FOR THE MOST PART SUPPORTED THE PRINCE".

OPPOSITION LEADERS LIKE LON NON AND FORMER PREMIER LONG SORET HAD BEEN "SHOT OUT OF HAND. BUT SO HAD MANY OTHERS WHO WERE SCARCELY ALIGNED WITH THE FORMER REGIME".

HE ADDED THAT GUERRILLA GROUPS WHO FOUGHT WITH THE COMMUNISTS BUT OWED ALLEGIANCE TO PRINCE SIHANOUK HAD "VANISHED WITHOUT TRACE".

MR. NOUTH ADDED: "THE PRINCE WAS APPALLED. IN THE PRIVACY OF THE PALACE HE WEPT."

THE ATTACHE SAID THE RECENT GOVERNMENT RESHUFFLE IN CAMBODIA HAD SEEN THE OUTNUMBERING OF KHIEU SAMPKAN, "A GENUINE NATIONALIST"; BY DEVOTEES OF NORTH VIETNAM.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER IENG SARY WAS DESCRIBED BY MR. NOUTH AS "A STOOGUE OF HANOI".

MR. SARY'S PROMOTION WAS "THE REAL BLOW," AND THE EXTERNAL MINISTER'S ATTENDANCE AT THE NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT IN LIMA KILLED "ANY HOPES OF THE PRINCE PLAYING A MEANINGFUL ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS".

WHILE IN PHNOM PENH, THE PRINCE WAS HARDLY ALLOWED MORE THAN 15 KILOMETERS (10 MILES) FROM THE CAPITAL. "OBVIOUSLY HE HAS BEEN DOUBLE-CROSSED", MR. NOUTH SAID, DESCRIBING THE VISIT AS A "DISASTER".

THE ATTACHE ADDED THAT PRINCE SIHANOUK "HANGS ON, NOT VERY HOPEFULLY, FULLY EXPECTING EVENTUAL REJECTION BY THE MEN IN POWER IN PHNOM PENH". END TEXT. INGERSOLL

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